

EMOR

31st of 54 sedras;
8th of 10 in Vayikra



Written on 215 lines (rank: 20th)

17 parshiyot; 11 open, 6 closed

124 p'sukim, rank: 15; 1st in Vayikra

Same as Sh'mot, but shorter in words & letters. Very very close in number of lines; but number of parshiyot affects line-count because of the blank spaces between parshiyot.

1614 words, rank: 22; 2nd in Vayikra

6106 letters, rank: 23; 2nd in Vayikra

Relatively short p'sukim account for its drop in ranking for words & letters

MITZVOT

63 of 613 mitzvot; 24 pos. 39 prohib.

Emor has more than one mitzva per two p'sukim, five times the Torah's average. Only Ki Teitzei (with 74) has more mitzvot than Emor. Only K'doshim and Ki Teitzei are more mitzva-dense.

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI; L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek & pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

Kohen - First Aliya 15 p'sukim - 21:1-15

A kohein gets the first Aliya of every Torah reading. That's a given. But this particular first Aliya is so perfectly appropriate for a kohein.

[P> 21:1 (9)] Following Parshat K'doshim, which focuses on the challenge to the individual Jew and the whole Jewish community to rise to higher levels of sanctification, Emor begins with the special sanctity of the kohein, and the even higher sanctity of the Kohein Gadol. These higher levels of k'dusha are concomitant with stricter rules of personal religious conduct.

A kohen is not to become ritually defiled by contact with a dead body [263, L166 21:1], except for his seven closest relatives: wife, mother, father, son, daughter, brother, and sister (unmarried). This is more than permission; a kohen is required to participate in the funeral and burial of his close relatives, becoming Tamei [264, A37 21:3].

MITZVAnotes

The Talmud teaches that from this same

source, mitzva 264, comes the requirement, incumbent upon all Jews (not just kohanim), to mourn one's seven close relatives. It is important to understand that this is NOT a case of rabbinic extension of Torah law or rabbinic legislation sanctioned by their obligation to "protect" Torah and mitzvot. This is more. This is part of the definition of the Torah's mitzva #264, as transmitted to us by the Oral Law via the Talmud. The Sages of the Talmud present us with two categories of Law - Torah Law, which includes the Written Word AND the Oral Law, and Rabbinic law. They not only teach us both, but they (most often) clearly differentiate between the two categories for us, so that we will know what is D'ORAITA and what is D'RABANAN, thereby neither adding to, nor detracting from, the Torah. Our commitment to G-d at Sinai includes careful adherence to Torah and Rabbinic Law (remember: the Torah requires us to listen to the rulings and teachings of the Sanhedrin - D'varim 17:11). But it is important for us to know the difference so that we will not have a distorted view of the Torah. (There are also practical distinctions between Biblical and Rabbinic law.)

Specifically, in the case of mourning, the first day is Torah Law, the balance of Shiva is Rabbinic. Rabbinic, but inspired by the Torah. But that's not the same as Torah law itself.

On another point... Note the one difference - a kohein may become Tamei

to his sister only if she was not married. Today, a kohein sits shiva for a married sister, but still has to maintain the practice of avoiding Tum'a. For a non-kohein, there is no distinction as to whether a person's sister is married or not. She is one of the 7 relatives for whom one mourns.

Kohanim (and all Jews) are forbidden to afflict the body in any way as a sign of grief.

[This is an example, among many, of a mitzva that appears in a particular sedra, but is counted elsewhere. In other words, Emor has even more than the "official" count of 63 mitzvot.]

Kohanim must be holy and avoid desecrating His Name, because they perform sacred service. This mitzva for the kohein is also taken to refer to the prohibition of doing Temple service after purification in a mikve, but before the (last) day of Tum'a has completely passed (i.e. stars-out) [265, L76 21:6]. Such a person is known as a T'VUL YOM. His complete purification only lacks time, not any act of his own.

A kohen may not marry a "zona" (a non-Jew and/or a Jewish women who has had relations with a man who is forbidden to her) [266, L158 21:7], a "chalala" (the daughter of a kohen from a woman to whom he is forbidden because he is a kohen) [267, L159 21:7], nor a divorcee [268, L160 21:7].

Because of the sanctity invested in the kohen by HaShem, we are commanded to honor the kohen [269, A32 21:8]. Calling him to the Torah first is one form of this honor. So is having him lead Birkat HaZimun. And, we may not "use" a kohen to serve us.

[S> 21:10 (6)] The Kohen Gadol has even more restrictions because of his higher sanctity. He may not defile himself to any dead person (even his parents - the only exception is a body that has no one to tend to it. This is known as a MEIT MITZVA) [271, L168 21:11] nor enter under a roof with a dead body [270, L167 21:11]. The Kohen Gadol's sanctity derives from the anointing oil and/or the special garments he wears. He is to marry a previously unmarried woman [272, A38 21:13]. He may not marry a widow [273, L161 21:14] nor any of the types of women that the regular kohen is forbidden to marry. He is further forbidden to have relations with a widow [274, L162 21:15], as this would contravene his sanctity.

The Kohen Gadol should (preferably) be smarter (better educated, wiser) than his fellow kohanim, bigger (taller), and wealthier.

One of the Chassidic Masters gave a different spin to the phrase HaKohein HaGadol Mei'Echav (plain meaning is the Kohein who is greater than his brothers, viz. the KG). He said it is the Kohein whose greatness comes from his brothers (Mei'Echav), a Kohein

respected and honored by his fellow kohanim.

Levi - Second Aliya 25 p'sukim - 21:16-22:16

[S> 21:16 (9)] A kohen with a disqualifying blemish may not serve in the Mikdash [275, L70 21:17]. The Torah next identifies many of the disqualifying blemishes. The rule applies not just to a permanent blemish or deformity, but even to temporary blemishes [276, L71 21:21]. A disqualified kohen may eat of the sacred foods (some but not all categories), but may not even enter the Mikdash [277, L69 21:23].

Clarification: A kohen BAAL MUM (with a disqualifying blemish) is barred from the area of the Mikdash from the (external) Altar and inward, but may enter the outer area of the courtyard of the Mikdash, and may perform certain tasks.

[P> 22:1 (16)] Furthermore, a kohen who becomes "tamei" is temporarily barred from the Mikdash [278, L75 22:2], nor may he "approach" sacred foods. He may not eat T'ruma [279, L136 22:4] or other "kodashim" while "tamei" from any of various sources. On the day of impurity (for the 1-day type) or on the last day (for the 7-day type), the kohen immerses in a mikve and, "with stars-out" that night, he once again becomes Tahor and is allowed to eat T'ruma, et al.

Not only may one not eat non-kosher meat, it also renders a kohen "tamei".

A non-kohen may not eat T'ruma [280, L133 22:10] (or other sacred foods specifically designated for the kohanim). Jewish servants and laborers of a kohen may not partake of T'ruma [281, L134 22:10]. OTOH, an "Eved K'naani" who is considered part of the kohen's possessions, may eat from his master's T'ruma. An uncircumcised male may not eat T'ruma (even if he has valid medical reasons for being uncircumcised) [282, L135 22:10]. This rule is not expressly stated in the text, but is learned by "parallel texts" (G'ZEIRA SHAVA) from Korban Pesach. It is nonetheless one of the 613 mitzvot - noteworthy, in that it is a mitzva with no direct "chapter & verse" to point to.

A kohen's daughter (and any woman) who has relations with someone to whom she is forbidden, may no longer eat T'ruma [283, L137 22:12]. This mitzva also includes the situation of a kohen's daughter who marries a non-kohen. During her marriage, she may not eat T'ruma. If her husband dies or divorces her, she may return to her father's home and eat T'ruma - if she does not have children. With children, the fear is she might feed them (her children are NOT kohanim) from the T'ruma. Hence, she too is barred.

A person who inadvertently eats T'ruma must compensate the kohen by paying the value plus an amount

which equals 1/5 of the payment. Eating "tevel" (produce from which none of the required separations was taken) is forbidden for all to eat [284, L153 22:15]. Violation constitutes a disgrace of the sacred.

Clarification: If a non-kohein unintentionally ate 100[□] worth of a kohein's T'ruma, he must compensate the kohein with 125[□]. This seems like his penalty is a quarter, not a fifth, since 25 is a quarter of 100. But look at it this way. His penalty payment, 25, is one fifth of the 125 that he pays. And that's the way the requirement of CHOMESH works.

Shlishi - Third Aliya 17 p'sukim - 22:17-33

[P> 22:17 (9)] Animals offered as sacrifices must be blemish-free [285, A61 22:20]. It is forbidden to consecrate a blemished animal as a korban [286, L91 22:21]. It is also forbidden to make a blemish in a korban [287, L97 22:21]. Blemishes referred to are specifically defined by the Torah and Talmud. If a blemished animal is offered, it is additionally forbidden to sprinkle its blood on the Mizbei'ach [288, L93 22:22], or to slaughter (as a korban) a defective animal [289, L92 22:22], nor to place any of the animal's parts on the Mizbei'ach to burn [290, L94 22:22].

Castration of animals is forbidden [291, L361 22:24]. (a serious, practical halachic issue related to house pets.

Consult a Rav who knows these things for guidelines and guidance.)

A defective animal may not be offered as a korban, even if received from a non-Jew [292, L96 22:25].

From this point through chapter 23, is the Torah reading for the first day of Sukkot (second day as well, outside of Israel) and the second day of Pesach (our first day of Chol HaMoed. Second day Yom Tov in Chutz LaAretz - got that?).

[S> 22:26 (8)] A new-born animal stays with its mother for 7 days and only thereafter (from the 8th day on) may be used as a korban [293, A60 22:27].

It is forbidden to slaughter (as a korban or for personal use) an animal and its offspring on the same day [294, L101 22:28].

The Torah, once again reminds us that korbanot to be eaten have time limits which must not be exceeded.

Note the previous two paragraphs. The first applies to korbanot; the second applies to all kosher animals.

Until this point in the sedra, the Torah has dealt with the sacrificer (kohein) and the sacrificee (animals). It now changes gears and we find another meaning of the word sacrifice, as in being willing to die in sanctification of G-d's Name.

We may not desecrate G-d's Name [295, L63 22:32]; we must sanctify His

Name [296, A9 22:32]. These mitzvot have many facets. A Jew is required to give up his life rather than violate one of the "big three": murder, incest/adultery and idolatry. In times of "forced conversion", martyrdom is required even for the "least" violation. And there are other aspects of our behavior which fit into other categories of Kiddush/Chilul HaShem.

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya 22 p'sukim - 23:1-22

[P> 23:1 (3)] Chapter 23 in Vayikra is the "Portion of the Holidays". It begins with the statement: "These are the Festivals..." Shabbat is presented as the first of the Holidays (we describe it so in Kiddush on Friday night when we say that Shabbat is in commemoration of the Exodus and is the first of the "days called Holy").

There is a different understanding of "six days... and on the 7th..." portion, attributed to the Vilna Gaon. This portion is NOT talking about Shabbat. It is a summary of the details about to be presented. There are six holy days that some work is permitted, but on the seventh holy day, it is a Shabbat Shabbaton and all manner of Melacha is forbidden. The six days on which some Melacha is permitted are the first and seventh day of Pesach, the one day of Shavuot, the one day of Rosh HaShana, and the first and eighth day of Sukkot. Yom Kippur, of course, is the Shabbat of Shabbats referred to.

[P> 23:4 (5)] On the 14th day of Nissan, the Korban Pesach is brought. On the 15th, begins the Matza Festival (which we call Pesach), with the mitzva to eat matza during the seven days of the Chag. The first is a holy day with most forms of "melacha" forbidden [297, 298; A159, L323 23:7].

In each case of a Yom Tov, there is a positive command to abstain from "melacha", and a prohibition against doing "melacha".

Korban Musaf is to be brought on each of the 7 days of Pesach [299, A43 23:8]. The seventh day is Yom Tov (with its twin mitzvot concerning melacha [300, 301; A160, L324 23:8]).

[P> 23:9 (6)] Following the first day of Pesach, the Omer (barley-offering) is brought [302, A44 23:10]. Special korbanot are offered on the day of the Omer. One may not eat different forms of new grains until the bringing of the Omer [303, 304, 305; L189, L190, L191 23:14].

[S> 23:15 (8)] We are to count from the day of the bringing of the Omer a period of 7 weeks - 49 days [306, A161 23:15]. We understand that Torah's 50 days, to mean "up to but not including" (because it also says 7 full weeks, and 50 is not divisible by 7, but 49 is).

Following the 49th day, a special offering of two loaves from the new wheat is to be offered [307, A46 23:16]. This is on the holiday of

Shavuot (although in this context, it is not named, giving it a strong status as the culmination of Pesach - elsewhere we find its name and character as its own holiday) which has "melacha" restrictions [308, 309; A162, L325 23:21]. This Aliya ends with the reminder of the gifts of the field that must be left for poor people.

Since PEI'A and LEKET were commanded in K'doshim (which makes it strange to be repeated so soon in the Torah), we can learn from this 'reminder' of the gifts to the poor that one should give extra Tzedaka before a Chag so poor people will be able to have Simchat Yom Tov.

Chamishi 5th Aliya 10 p'sukim - 23:23-32

[P> 23:23 (3)] The first day of the 7th month (Tishrei) is holy (Rosh HaShana), "melacha" being forbidden [310, 311; A163, L326 23:24,25]. Special Musaf sacrifices are brought [312, A47 23:25], in addition to the Rosh Chodesh Musaf. Note that Shofar is not counted here, but in Parshat Pinchas. Here Rosh HaShana is referred to as ZICHRON T'RU'A, a remembrance of the T'ru'a. (We use the term Zichron T'ru'a to refer to the day when it coincides with Shabbat, in which case we do NOT blow the Shofar.) In Pinchas, the Torah tells us to have a "T'ru'a day" - that is the command to hear Shofar-blowing [405, A170].

[P> 23:26 (7)] The tenth of Tishrei is Yom Kippur. One must fast [313, A164 23:27]. There is a Korban Musaf to be brought on Yom Kippur [314, A48 23:27], (in addition to the Yom Kippur service described in Achrei). Eating or drinking (without a valid excuse) is punishable by excision (death and more, from Heaven). ALL "melacha" is forbidden [315, L329 23:28], as are eating and drinking on Yom Kippur [316, L196 23:29]. We must abstain from all Shabbat-like "melacha" on Yom Kippur [317, A165 23:32].

Shishi - Sixth Aliya 12 p'sukim - 23:33-44

[P> 23:33 (12)] The 15th of Tishrei is Sukkot, a 7-day holiday. "M'lechet Avoda", (referring to most of the Shabbat restrictions, with the well-known Yom Tov exceptions) is forbidden on its first day [318, 319; A166, L327 23:35]. Musaf sacrifices are to be brought on each of the 7 days [320, A50 23:36]. The eighth day (sometimes Shmini Atzeret, a.k.a. Simchat Torah, is viewed as its own holiday; sometimes as the 8th day of Sukkot) is also a Yom Tov [321, 322; A167, L328 23:36] with a korban musaf of its own [323, A51 23:36].

These are the Holidays, besides the Shabbatot of the year and other offerings to the Beit HaMikdash. It is at the harvest time in the fall that Sukkot is to be celebrated.

On the first day we are required to

take the four species (lulav, etrog, hadasim, aravot) [324, A169 23:40].

The Torah requires the Four Species on the first day of Sukkot. In the Beit HaMikdash, the mitzva was to be observed on all seven days of the Chag. After the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash, the Sanhedrin ruled that we do the mitzva of the ARBAA MINIM throughout the Chag (with the exception of Shabbat).

During the seven days of the holiday of Sukkot, we are to dwell in sukkot [325, A168 23:42]. This is in order to instruct all generations about the aftermath of the Exodus when we were privileged to Divine protection in the wilderness.

Sh'VII Seventh Aliya 23 p'sukim - 24:1-23

[P> 24:1 (4)] G-d tells Moshe to command the people to prepare pure virgin olive oil (EVOO) for lighting the Menorah, always. The lamps of the Menorah burned through each and every night, right outside the dividing curtain (Parochet) between the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies.

The juxtaposition of the Festivals and the lighting of the Menorah is taken as a hint (REMEZ) to Chanuka from the Torah. What even makes the point stronger is the Torah's stress on the concept that the lights of the Menorah are constant, eternal, through the generations. The Menorah of the Beit

HaMikdash has not made it through the generations. (We, of course look forward to its being lit daily in the third Beit HaMikdash, but it's been a long time since it was lit.) The Chanuka lights have made it through the generations and continue to do so! Note too that the Kohen lights the Menorah in the Beit HaMikdash and the kohanim (Bnei Chashmona'im) were the ones responsible for the relighting of the Menorah and for the resultant mitzva of lighting the Chanuka Menora, from then and for all times.

[P> 24:5 (5)] We are also to take fine flour and bake 12 loaves (matza rules) which are placed on the Shulchan in the Mikdash. This too was a permanent fixture in the Beit HaMikdash. The loaves were exchanged weekly, on Shabbat (having been baked on Friday, unless it was a Yom Tov - then the baking was on Erev Yom Tov). The kohanim on duty would share the loaves that were replaced by the new ones. This mitzva was counted back in Parshat T'ruma, when the Shulchan was first described.

[S> 24:10 (3)] In an abrupt change of subjects, the Torah next tells us of the son of a Jewess and an Egyptian who "blessed" G-d's name. He was incarcerated pending word from G-d on how to punish him. The command was to stone him to death. This is to be the punishment for "blessing G-d".

So too, murder is a capital offense.

Killing an animal requires compensa-

tion to the owner.

Causing injury to a person requires compensation based on factors resulting from the injury.

The execution of the "curser" was carried out, as commanded by G-d through Moshe.

The three last p'sukim are repeated for the Maftir.

Haftara 17 p'sukim Yechezkeil 44:15-31

Yechezkeil, himself a kohen whose early days were spent in the Beit HaMikdash, prophesies the rebuilding of the Mikdash and the restoration of the active kehuna. He reiterates many of the rules of the kohen, many of which are based in Parshat Emor. Interestingly, some of his rules are stricter than required by Torah law, but suited the conditions of his time. Yechezkeil restates the marriages permitted and forbidden to a kohen. He says that a kohen cannot marry a divorcee (true) nor a widow (not so; only the K.G. may not marry a widow). But he adds that a kohen may marry a widow of a kohen. Apparently, by not allowing a kohen of the time to marry a widow of a non-kohen, the community would take care of its widows in a better way. To apply the halachic details to the future, on a permanent basis is problematic in light of the immutability of the Torah. But they can be considered "for the moment" or

possibly they could be considered chumrot.

In addition to the obvious Kohein, Beit HaMikdash, Tum'a-Tahara connections between sedra and haftara, there is another connection. The haftara charges kohanim with teaching the people and clarifying for them G-d's laws. Specific mention is made of the laws of the Holidays and Shabbat - which is a major part of the sedra.